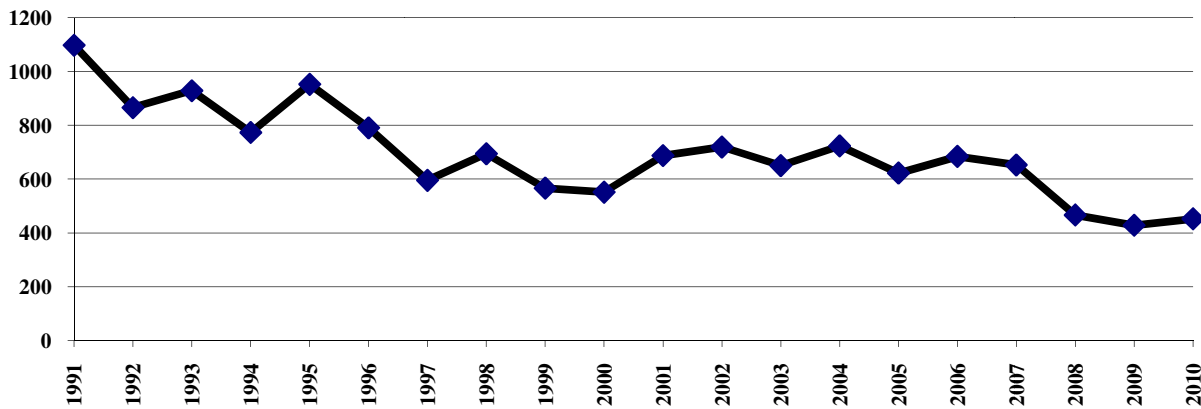


BURGLARY

Burglary is described as the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft. The use of force to gain entry is not required to classify an offense as burglary. Burglary attempts are included in the total.

**Twenty Year Review:
Burglary in Cambridge, 1991-2010**



429 reported in 2009 • 453 reported in 2010

Burglary is categorized as a more serious crime than larceny because it involves the use of force and unlawful entry into a business or residence. Perpetrators employ various techniques to enter residences or businesses. Since burglars need to pull off their heist quickly, break-ins are occasionally only unsuccessful “attempts,” in which no entry is made, but damage is caused to the structure.

	2009	2010	% Change from 09-10
Commercial Burglary	86	87	+1%
Residential Burglary	343	366	+7%
Total	429	453	+6%

Over the past 20 years, burglary in Cambridge has decreased by approximately 59%. Burglary crimes peaked in the late 1980's, decreased dramatically in the early 1990's, and remained relatively stable in the 2000's until 2009, when Cambridge recorded its lowest burglary total in 50 years.

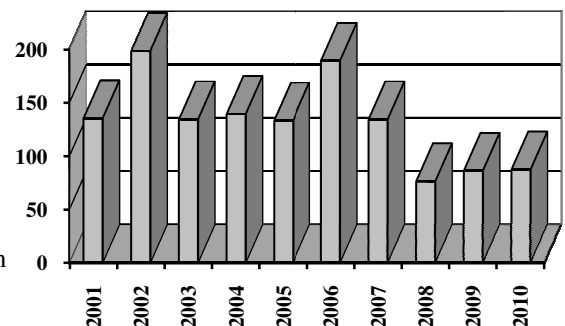
Burglars often fall into two types: the “amateur” and the “professional.” Amateurs are likely to smash windows or kick in doors to enter unoccupied buildings. These burglars will often take lightweight, visible property, such as a purse left on a table, loose change, a laptop, or other less costly items. “Professional” burglars, alternatively, are more sophisticated in their methods and tend to steal higher-priced items. They often pry open a door, disable alarms, and even occasionally enter occupied establishments.

For the purposes of analysis, burglary is divided into two main categories: *commercial* and *residential*.

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

A commercial burglary, more commonly referred to as a *commercial break*, is the unlawful entry into a commercial establishment, including business, government, religious, or retail establishments. Between 2009 and 2010, there was a 1% increase in commercial breaks in Cambridge. Two years ago in 2008, Cambridge saw the lowest report of commercial breaks in the past fifty years. Over the past five years, commercial breaks have averaged approximately 124 incidents a year, a 20% decrease from the previous five-year average.

Commercial Burglary 2001-2010



A wide variety of establishments are targeted in commercial burglary using an array of methods. Most breaks can be categorized as one of the following:

- ◆ **Smash & Grab** burglaries target display windows along major routes. The burglar runs or drives up, smashes the window, steals valuables from the immediate window area, and runs off. The entire endeavor may take less than a minute.
- ◆ **Retail** burglars pry or smash their way into stores or other locations with cash registers on the premises. They hope to steal cash left in the register/safe and may grab cigarettes or lottery tickets on the way out.
- ◆ **Restaurant/Bar** burglars often cross multiple jurisdictions, breaking into similar franchises, looking for safes.
- ◆ **Business** burglars enter real-estate offices, law firms, technology companies, and other offices, looking for laptop computers and other expensive equipment.
- ◆ **Construction Site/Industrial Area** thieves are a special breed of burglars who know how to select, steal, and sell expensive power tools, building supplies, and heavy equipment. They are often in the business themselves and may have done subcontract work on the sites that they target. Construction site and industrial area burglaries increased by 450% from 2005 to 2006 due to increases in thefts of copper. This pattern seemed to be eradicated in 2007, but as the prices increased this year, so did the breaks.
- ◆ **Safe Crackers** are a more professional type of burglar. In these incidents, perpetrators enter businesses with high cash intake, such as restaurants and bars, and usually take that cash.
- ◆ **Church** burglars are usually homeless individuals with substance abuse problems. They enter lightly secured houses of worship, looking for petty cash and easily fenced items.
- ◆ **School** burglars are generally juveniles, breaking into their own schools to vandalize or steal computers and other expensive everyday goods. Youth centers/daycares are included.

IN FOCUS: PROFESSIONAL COMMERCIAL BURGLARY PATTERNS

In 2010, there was an increase of 1% in commercial burglaries. There were no significant patterns during 2010, but there were a few breaks that possibly fit into larger regional patterns. There were two breaks in the first week of March that targeted laptops in commercial establishments in lower Cambridge. A convenience store on Mass Ave was broken into on back-to-back nights in May by way of “smash and grabs”. On one weekend in June, there were three commercial breaks reported in the upper

TYPE OF PREMISE	2009	2010
Bar/Restaurant/Social	19	19
Business Offices	25	18
Other: (hair salons, health clubs, laundromat etc)	13	14
Retail Establishments	4	12
Convenience/Gas	9	6
Government Building	2	5
Industrial/Construction	1	5
Church	5	4
School/Youth Center	8	4
TOTAL	86	87

half of the city, one of which was an attempt. The windows of two of the businesses were broken by a rock and the third involved an unknown point of entry. In July, there were three gas station/convenience store breaks in the upper part of Cambridge. They were thought to possibly be connected to an emerging pattern in Boston targeting cash and cigarettes. A suspect from Boston was later arrested in a gas station break on Concord Ave, effectively ending the series of incidents. Aside from these previous incidents, convenience store/gas station breaks seemed to be a regional trend in 2010 that only slightly affected Cambridge, as they dropped 33% in this city compared to 2009. Pharmacy burglaries were also seen across the region in 2010, but only minimally affected Cambridge. There were two pharmacy breaks on the same day in September. The Skenderian Apothecary was broken into and the phone lines were cut shortly before midnight; hundreds of prescription medications were stolen. A few hours earlier, the phone lines of the Inman Pharmacy were also cut, but no entry was gained. No arrests have been made in either incident.

After a lull in industrial/construction site breaks in 2009, there was an uptick this year as the price of materials rebounded. This also affected larceny from residences, specifically involving thefts of copper downspouts. About 18% of the breaks in 2010 were attempts in which no entry was gained, and only one was considered an “inside job” in which an employee or known associate was believed to be responsible. Together these two categories accounted for almost a fifth of the commercial breaks in 2010. Business districts varied this year with the Alewife/West Cambridge district seeing a significant increase of 113%, while the Inman Square/Harrington district saw a drop of 50% or seven incidents.

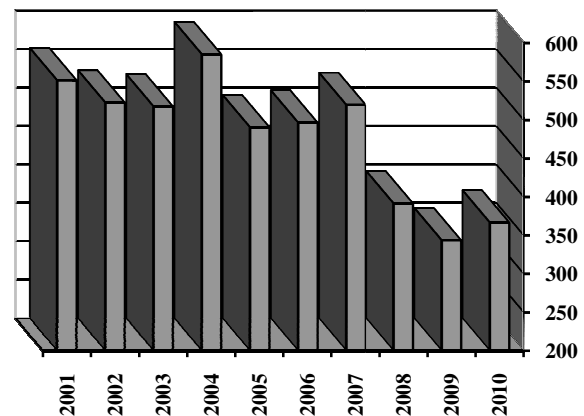
GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF COMMERCIAL BURGLARIES					
Business District	2008	2009	2010	% Change 09-10	% of Total
Central Square	17	21	19	-10%	22%
Porter Square/North Cambridge	7	13	18	+38%	21%
Alewife/West Cambridge	10	8	17	+113%	20%
Harvard Square	8	8	13	+63%	15%
Inman Square/Harrington	9	14	7	-50%	8%
Massachusetts Avenue 1500-1900	5	9	5	-44%	6%
East Cambridge/Galleria	12	4	3	-25%	3%
Kendall Square/M.I.T.	3	2	2	0%	2%
Cambridgeport/Riverside	2	1	2	+100%	2%
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	3	6	1	-83%	1%

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

Residential burglaries, or “housebreaks,” are of particular concern to local police and communities because of the loss of personal security felt when one’s home is invaded and possessions are stolen.

Housebreaks were up 7% in Cambridge in 2010 compared to 2009. This total includes 57 housebreak incidents (or 16%) that were attempted but not completed. Both Mid-Cambridge and Area 4 recorded increases of over 50% and are very similar to the numbers reported in 2008. Peabody and East Cambridge saw the most significant declines in 2010, both dropping over 35%.

Residential Burglary, 2001-2010



GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY					
AREA	2008	2009	2010	% Change 09-10	% of Total
Mid-Cambridge	61	36	65	+81%	18%
Area 4	47	30	47	+57%	13%
Cambridgeport	32	38	44	+16%	12%
Inman/Harrington	55	27	41	+52%	11%
North Cambridge	34	54	40	-26%	11%
Riverside	23	32	29	-9%	8%
Peabody	50	43	27	-37%	7%
West Cambridge	33	23	24	+4%	7%
East Cambridge	28	40	23	-43%	6%
Agassiz	20	14	21	+7%	6%
Strawberry Hill	6	4	5	+25%	1%
Cambridge Highlands	2	2	0	0%	0%
M.I.T. Area	0	0	0	No change	0%
TOTALS	391	343	366	+7%	

Housebreaks most commonly occur during the daytime while victims are not home, or while the homeowners are away on vacation. Suspects are often long gone by the time the victim returns home and calls police. A large number of housebreaks are simply attempts in which a suspect tries but is unable to gain entry to a residence. The victim later discovers signs that someone tried to enter. Unknown suspects are typically the perpetrators in Cambridge housebreaks, although a small percentage of incidents involve acquaintances or family

members. For example, 4% of all reported housebreak victims in 2010 named an acquaintance (friend, roommate, or neighbor) or landlord as a suspect. An additional 4% of incidents were categorized as domestic (perpetrated by family members, ex-boyfriends, etc). Arrests were made in 19, or 5%, of the housebreak incidents in 2010.

Entry is gained into a residence by various methods. The most common point of entry is through a door, whether it is a front door, rear door, or unknown. This point of entry accounted for 49% of housebreaks in 2010. However, entry is also often made via windows, especially during the summer months. This point of entry accounted for 40% of the incidents in 2010. The front doors of a residence were pried/forced/broken in 14% of the housebreaks in 2010. Window entry was significant regarding two different methods: shoved/forced/prried windows accounted for 11% of the incidents, and cut or removed window screens accounted for 12%. However, unlocked windows and doors combined enabled suspects to enter without force in at least 10% of all housebreaks in 2010. Historically, the property targeted in housebreaks typically includes cash and jewelry, but in a society where many own valuable electronics, common targets of theft now include laptops, iPods, digital cameras, TVs, DVD players, and video gaming systems.

Compared to previous years, there were very few noteworthy housebreak patterns that occurred in Cambridge in 2010. In 2007 and part of 2008, there was an on-again off-again pattern that accounted for nearly 50% of the housebreaks citywide and involved over 100 stolen laptops. In 30 years of observing housebreak patterns in Cambridge, this series was the first in which a group of juvenile suspects was identified and appeared to be working in consort over an extended period of time in a concentrated area of the City. Due to arrests and eradication of this pattern, it was no surprise that housebreaks in 2009 saw a 12% decrease from 2008 and a 34% decrease from 2007.

Although housebreaks rose slightly in 2010 by 7%, patterns as substantial as the one in 2007 and 2008 did not emerge. However, there were a few smaller patterns of note, some that were eradicated by arrests:

- In February of 2010, there was a brief pattern that emerged in North Cambridge, involving about six breaks. One of the main suspects in this pattern was arrested in April for a housebreak in Somerville and admitted to being active in the Cambridge area with three other suspects.
- Another quick pattern took place at the end of April through the beginning of May. Six breaks occurred in two weeks between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. in Cambridgeport. Entry was gained through windows, and laptops and flat screen TVs were targeted. Property from one of the breaks was recovered from a motor vehicle during an arrest of known housebreak suspects in mid-May.
- From late July through early September, there were nine late week/weekend housebreaks reported in West Cambridge. Entry was through windows and items targeted included laptops, cameras, tools, and purses. A possible suspect was identified, but no arrests were made and the pattern cooled off.
- The most prominent pattern to occur in 2010 took place in Agassiz and Mid-Cambridge from July through September. During this time, roughly 30 breaks were reported in the area. The time frame for these incidents was mainly over the weekend, and entry was through forced windows or cut screens. Laptops and electronics were targeted. This was the most significant pattern of the year not only due to the number of breaks involved but also because Somerville also reported a significant increase in housebreaks right over the border during this same time frame. A few suspects were arrested in October for selling stolen property from a housebreak in Somerville and were thought to be prime suspects in the pattern of breaks in Cambridge as well.
- From August to September, there was a series of daytime housebreaks in Peabody between 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Entry was gained by cutting window screens and thieves targeted jewelry, silverware, and laptops. This pattern accounted for approximately 12 breaks over the course of a month.

Top Five Items Stolen/Targeted in 2010		
	Housebreaks:	Commercial Burglaries:
1	Laptop	Cash
2	Jewelry	Laptop
3	Camera	Television
4	Cash	Tools
5	MP3 Player	Cigarettes

